

Richard Wagner

Die Walküre

CONDUCTOR
James Levine

PRODUCTION
Robert Lepage

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Neilson Vignola

SET DESIGNER
Carl Fillion

COSTUME DESIGNER
François St-Aubin

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Etienne Boucher

VIDEO IMAGE ARTIST
Boris Firquet

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

Libretto by the composer

Saturday, May 14, 2011, 12:00–5:10 pm

New Production

Last time this season

The production of *Die Walküre* was made possible by a generous gift from Ann Ziff and the Ziff Family, in memory of William Ziff.

In collaboration with Ex Machina

The Metropolitan Opera
2010–11 Season

The 529th Metropolitan Opera performance of

Richard Wagner's

Die Walküre

This performance is being broadcast live over The Toll Brothers–Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network, sponsored by Toll Brothers, America's luxury homebuilder®, with generous long-term support from The Annenberg Foundation, the Vincent A. Stabile Endowment for Broadcast Media, and contributions from listeners worldwide.

This performance is also being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SiriusXM channel 74.

CONDUCTOR
James Levine

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Siegmund
Jonas Kaufmann

Helmwige
Molly Fillmore

Sieglinde
Eva-Maria Westbroek

Waltraute
Marjorie Elinor Dix *

Hunding
Hans-Peter König

Schwertleite
Mary Phillips

Wotan
Bryn Terfel

Ortlinde
Wendy Bryn Harmer *

Brünnhilde
Deborah Voigt

Siegfrune
Eve Gigliotti

Fricka
Stephanie Blythe *

Grimgerde
Mary Ann McCormick

Gerhilde
Kelly Cae Hogan

Rossweiße
Lindsay Ammann

Saturday, May 14, 2011, 12:00–5:10 pm

This afternoon's performance is also being transmitted live in high definition to movie theaters worldwide.

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Bryn Terfel as Wotan and Deborah Voigt as Brünnhilde in a scene from *Die Walküre*



Ken Howard/Metropolitan Opera

Musical Preparation **Dennis Giauque, Donna Racik, Linda Hall, Derrick Inouye, and Howard Watkins**

Assistant Stage Directors **Gina Lapinski, Stephen Pickover, and J. Knighten Smit**

Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**

German Coach **Irene Spiegelman**

Prompter **Donna Racik**

Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted by **Scène Éthique (Varenes, Québec)** and **Metropolitan Opera Shops**

Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**

Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**

EX MACHINA PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Consultant **Rebecca Blankenship**

Interactive Content Designers **Réalisations.net**

Additional Video Artist **Jayel Draco**

Production Manager **Bernard Gilbert**, Assistant **Viviane Paradis**

Technical Director **Michel Gosselin**, Assistant **Eric Gautron**

Automation Designer **Tobie Horswill**

Video Project Manager **Catherine Guay**

Special Effects Integrator **Philippe Jean**

Initial Interactive Video Designer **Holger Förterer**

Properties Project Manager **Stéphane Longpré**

Rig & Safety Adviser **Guy St-Amour**

Costume Project Manager **Charline Boulerice**

Rehearsal Stage Manager **Félix Dagenais**

Production Coordinators **Vanessa Landry-Claverie** and **Nadia Bellefeuille**

Producer **Michel Bernatchez**

This production uses flash effects.

Projectors provided by **Panasonic**

Projection technology consultants **Scharff Weisberg**

Additional projection equipment **Christie Digital**

This performance is made possible in part by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

Before the performance begins, please switch off cell phones and other electronic devices. Latecomers will not be admitted during the performance.

* Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

Synopsis

Act I

Hunding's house

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 1:05 PM)

Act II

High in the mountains

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 3:20 PM)

Act III

A mountain top

Act I

Pursued by enemies during a snowstorm, Siegmund stumbles exhausted into an unfamiliar house. Sieglinde finds him lying by the hearth, and the two feel an immediate attraction. They are interrupted by Sieglinde's husband, Hunding, who asks the stranger who he is. Calling himself "Woeful," Siegmund tells of a disaster-filled life, only to learn that Hunding is a kinsman of his enemies. Hunding tells his guest they will fight to the death in the morning.

Alone, Siegmund calls on his father, Wälse—who is in fact Wotan, leader of the gods, in human disguise—for the sword he once promised him. Sieglinde reappears, having given Hunding a sleeping potion. She tells of her wedding, at which a one-eyed stranger thrust into a tree a sword that has since resisted every effort to pull it out ("Der Männer Sippe"). Sieglinde confesses her unhappiness to Siegmund. He embraces her and promises to free her from her forced marriage to Hunding. As moonlight floods the room, Siegmund compares their feelings to the marriage of love and spring ("Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond"). Sieglinde addresses him as "Spring" but asks if his father was really "Wolf," as he said earlier. When Siegmund gives his father's name as Wälse instead, Sieglinde recognizes him as her twin brother. Siegmund pulls the sword from the tree and claims Sieglinde as his bride, rejoicing in the union of the Wälsons.

Act II

High in the mountains, Wotan tells his warrior daughter, the Valkyrie Brünnhilde, that she must defend his mortal son Siegmund in his upcoming battle with Hunding. She leaves joyfully to do what he has asked, as Fricka, Wotan's wife and the goddess of marriage, appears. Fricka insists that Wotan must defend Hunding's marriage rights against Siegmund. She ignores his argument that Siegmund could save the gods by winning back the Nibelung Alberich's all-powerful ring from the dragon Fafner. When Wotan realizes he is caught in his

own trap—he will lose his power if he does not enforce the law—he submits to his wife’s demands. After Fricka has left, the frustrated god tells the returning Brünnhilde about the theft of the Rhinegold and Alberich’s curse on it (“Als junger Liebe Lust mir verblich”). Brünnhilde is shocked to hear her father, his plans in ruins, order her to fight for Hunding.

Siegmond comforts his fearful bride and watches over her when she falls asleep. Brünnhilde appears to him as if in a vision, telling him he will soon die and go to Valhalla (“Siegmond! Sieh auf mich!”). He replies that he will not leave Sieglinde and threatens to kill himself and his bride if his sword has no power against Hunding. Moved by his steadfastness, Brünnhilde decides to defy Wotan and help Siegmund. Siegmund bids farewell to Sieglinde when he hears the approaching Hunding’s challenge. The two men fight and Siegmund is about to be victorious, when Wotan appears and shatters Siegmund’s sword, leaving him to be killed by Hunding. Brünnhilde escapes with Sieglinde and the broken weapon. Wotan contemptuously kills Hunding with a wave of his hand and leaves to punish Brünnhilde for her disobedience.

Act III

Brünnhilde’s eight warrior sisters have gathered on their mountaintop, bearing slain heroes to Valhalla. They are surprised to see Brünnhilde arrive with a woman, Sieglinde. When they hear she is fleeing Wotan’s wrath, they are afraid to hide her. Sieglinde is numb with despair until Brünnhilde tells her she bears Siegmund’s child. Now eager to be saved, she takes the pieces of the sword from Brünnhilde, thanks her, and rushes off into the forest to hide from Wotan. When the god appears, he sentences Brünnhilde to become a mortal woman, silencing her sisters’ objections by threatening to do the same to them. Left alone with her father, Brünnhilde pleads that in disobeying his orders she was really doing what he wished. Wotan will not give in: she must lie in sleep, a prize for any man who finds her. She asks to be surrounded in sleep by a wall of fire that only the bravest hero can pierce. Both sense this hero must be the child that Sieglinde will bear. Sadly renouncing his daughter (“Leb’ wohl, du kühnes, herrliches Kind”), Wotan kisses Brünnhilde’s eyes with sleep and mortality before summoning Loge, the god of fire, to encircle the rock. As flames spring up, the departing Wotan invokes a spell defying anyone who fears his spear to brave the flames.

Met Titles

To activate, press the red button to the right of the screen in front of your seat and follow the instructions provided. To turn off the display, press the red button once again. If you have questions please ask an usher at intermission.

A Conversation with the Director

On the eve of the premiere of *Die Walküre*, Robert Lepage talks about the challenges of creating a new *Ring* for the Met.

Die Walküre marks the second installment in your new production of the Ring cycle. How have your experiences with Das Rheingold shaped your approach? When you embark on such a huge undertaking as the Ring, you know that whatever ideas you had at the beginning will evolve as you go. You have all of these visions and intentions and ambitions, and they're very exciting on paper or in the rehearsal room, but it only really comes to life once you have an audience and this extraordinary cast actually performing it.

The story of the Ring takes on a whole new dimension in Die Walküre. What are some of the themes you're focusing on?

It's important to understand that *Das Rheingold* is a prologue. It's about the origins of the world, it takes place in a realm of myth and gods and giants and dwarves. It's kind of a fantasy world, but it's never as exciting as when mortals walk into the story, and of course that's exactly what happens in *Die Walküre*. Suddenly we deal with love and nature. *Walküre* is a piece where there are snowstorms, where there is lightning, where love affairs happen in houses deep in the woods. It's the introduction of the sensuous world, a world that is very much alive, with molten lava and rocks and forest.

The opera's title role, sung by Deborah Voigt, is one of the towering characters in all of opera. How would you describe her?

Brünnhilde is a great tragic figure. Like the characters in Greek tragedy, she has a sense of duty that instructs her to do certain things. She has the wisdom she inherited from Erda and the personal sense of justice that comes from Wotan. These two things are in conflict and she's trying to find a way to be faithful to both, which is typical of a tragic character, trying to reconcile two aspects of one's personality. That's why she's so inspiring to a lot of people—she's a woman who has a lot of masculine power, almost a military character in a sense. At the same time, she's a loving daughter who respects her father and is in awe of him. He's the most important thing in the world to her but she has to disobey him if she wants to be faithful to who she is becoming. It's an extraordinary journey.

There will be other extraordinary characters later in the Ring too.

What's interesting is that, even though characters like Brünnhilde or Siegfried are strong heroes sung by mature singers, they're basically teenagers. Their emotions are the emotions of teenagers who are discovering love, their identities, their sexuality, their goals. Why is it that they're there, and what is it that they have to do? That's why we identify with them.

What would you say is the essence of the Ring?

It's about reconciliation and forgiveness. The world of the *Ring* is all about conflicts giving way to new conflicts, and if you're telling stories like that, you eventually have to come to one big reconciliation, one big rapture. The fact that it's called the "*Ring*" implies that there's a cycle: Whatever you do, you go back to square one and you start again. You go through the same cycle, but you've learned from the first one. It's more a spiral than a ring. When the whole thing crumbles at the end and it's going to start again, with a new world emerging, you really have the feeling that everything that happened in that first world will serve as a lesson. I think it's a very optimistic ending, even though it's a catastrophe. There's something soothing about the Rhine going out of its boundary and washing everything away, coming back to that limpid clarity of the beginning.

In the works of Wagner, the connection between the music and the stage is stronger than in most of the rest of the repertoire. How do you achieve a balance between the two?

A director has to know his place in the context of an opera. We're dealing with space. Maestro Levine deals with time. And in a good production, time and space meet in a proper manner. You have to know when to let go and let the maestro take over, because the music is the guide. Take the first scene of *Die Walküre*: Siegmund is not going to pour a cup of mead if the leitmotif indicates that he should be looking at Sieglinde. We're guided by Wagner and by the music. In the end, whatever it is that you want or plan as a director, the music always wins. If we've been faithful to the music, and if we've used it to find our subtext, find our movements, be in harmony with Wagner, then we've done a good job. —*Edited by Philipp Brieler*

Richard Wagner

Die Walküre

Premiere: Munich, Court Theater, 1870

The second opera in Wagner's monumental *Ring* cycle, *Die Walküre* has long stood on its own as an evening of extraordinarily powerful theater. Part of *Die Walküre's* appeal lies in its focus on some of the *Ring's* most interesting characters at decisive moments of their lives: Wotan, the leader of the gods, whose compromise of his own laws has jeopardized the gods' rule; his wife, Fricka, whose refusal to compromise causes more problems for the gods; his twin offspring, Siegmund and Sieglinde, who are meant to save the gods; and, above all, Wotan's warrior daughter Brünnhilde (the Valkyrie of the title), who transforms from goddess to woman. These characters and others follow their destinies to some of Wagner's most remarkable music.

The Creator

Richard Wagner (1813–1883) was the complex, controversial creator of music-drama masterpieces that stand at the center of today's operatic repertory. Born in Leipzig, Germany, he was an artistic revolutionary who reimagined every supposition about music and theater. Wagner wrote his own librettos and insisted that words and music were equal in his works. This approach led to the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or "total work of art," combining music, poetry, architecture, painting, and other disciplines, a notion that has had an impact on creative fields far beyond traditional operatic territory.

The Setting

Die Walküre is set in mythological times, when gods, giants, dwarves, and humans all contended for power. While the first part of the cycle, *Das Rheingold*, moves between realms above and below the earth, *Die Walküre* takes place entirely in human territory, as the balance of power in the cosmic struggle tips ever so slowly toward humanity. While no location is specified in the libretto, the Teutonic mythology Wagner based his story on and the significance of the Rhine River in the epic suggest a Germanic setting.

The Music

Throughout the *Ring* cycle, Wagner uses a system of musical themes, or leitmotifs, associated with characters, events, emotions, and things. This fascinating approach has been the subject of intense musicological and philosophical investigation. A good example of how it works is found at the very beginning of *Die Walküre*, when the "thunder theme" is heard. It was first introduced in the

final scene of *Das Rheingold*, before the gods enter Valhalla. In *Die Walküre*, it is apparent that this theme (like most of the *Ring's* leitmotifs) has a direct, literal meaning—the character Siegmund is running through a storm—and also a less direct, oblique significance—we subconsciously connect Siegmund with the divinities in Valhalla, even before the character himself discovers his true identity. The entire first act of *Die Walküre* depicts the experience of falling in love in one great arc, from initial attraction to consummation. It is one of the theater's most convincing portrayals of the power of love—even if the lovers in question are in fact twin brother and sister. At the beginning of Act II, the iconic character of Brünnhilde bursts onto the stage with the war cry of “Hojotoho!” The role demands both power and subtlety at the singer's very first appearance. Later in the act, there is a sense of ritual as Brünnhilde tells Siegmund he will die in battle: the formality of the music turns into less structured dialogue as emotions overtake rules, a symbol of humanity taking power from the gods. The beginning of Act III features the famous Ride of the Valkyries. In a dramatic masterstroke, Wagner uses the sound of eight powerful female voices, punctuated by shrieking laughter, to depict the terrible thrill of combat. The opera ends with some of the most moving music ever composed, as Wotan intones his farewell to Brünnhilde.

Die Walküre at the Met

The opera was first seen at the Met in 1885, with Leopold Damrosch conducting Wagner veterans Amalie Materna and Marianne Brandt in a re-creation of Josef Hoffmann's designs for the Bayreuth Festival. A new production was mounted in 1896, and again in 1903, the latter with Felix Mottl conducting Johanna Gadski, Olive Fremstad, Louise Homer, and Anton van Rooy. Gustav Mahler conducted several performances of this production in 1908. A new production in 1935 featured the Met debut of Marjorie Lawrence as Brünnhilde, with Artur Bodanzky conducting. Wotan was sung by Friedrich Schorr, one of several great German singers who found a home at the Met during the 1930s and '40s. The Saturday afternoon broadcast that year featured the Met debut of Kirsten Flagstad, who became the preeminent Brünnhilde of her era. Fritz Stiedry conducted a new *Ring* in 1948 with Helen Traubel, Rose Bampton, Lauritz Melchior, and Herbert Janssen. A remarkable *Walküre* was staged in 1967 with Herbert von Karajan making his Met debut conducting Birgit Nilsson, Gundula Janowitz, Christa Ludwig, Jon Vickers, and Thomas Stewart. A new production by Otto Schenk debuted on opening night of 1986, with James Levine conducting Hildegard Behrens, Jeannine Altmeyer, Peter Hofmann, and Simon Estes. Artists who have appeared in this staging until it was retired in 2009 include Jane Eaglen, Gwyneth Jones, Waltraud Meier, Jessye Norman, Leonie Rysanek, Deborah Voigt, Theo Adam, Plácido Domingo, James Morris, and Matti Salminen. This new production by Robert Lepage, part of a new *Ring* cycle that is being unveiled over two seasons, is also conducted by Maestro Levine, who has led more than 60 performances of this opera at the Met since 1984.

Program Note

“My *Walküre* turns out terribly beautiful,” Richard Wagner wrote to his friend, the composer Franz Liszt, on June 16, 1852. “I hope to submit to you the whole poem of the tetralogy before the end of the summer. The music will be easily and quickly done, for it is only the execution of something practically ready.”

For neither the first nor the last time in Wagner’s life, things did not work out quite as he had planned. By the end of that year he had, indeed, finished the libretto (or “poem,” as he called it) for his four-part cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (“The Ring of the Nibelung”), based on stories from ancient Germanic and Norse myths. But the music for *Walküre* was not finished until December 1854, and it was another year and a half before he finished the orchestration.

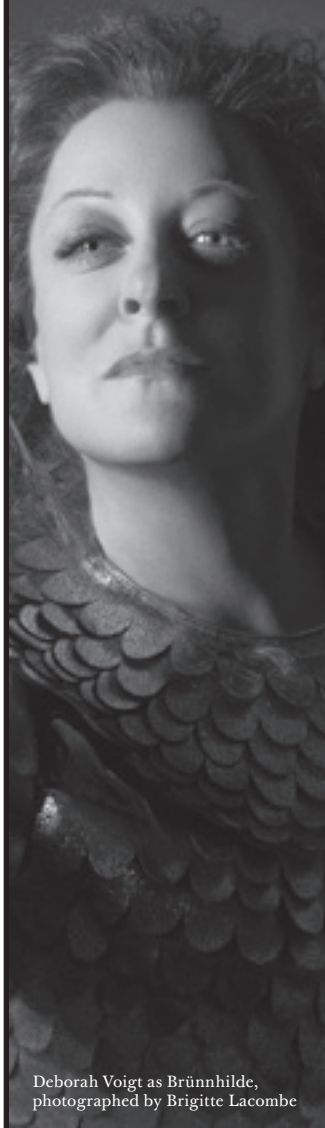
The *Ring* begins with *Das Rheingold*, a one-act work Wagner called a “Preliminary Evening.” *Die Walküre* (“First Day of the Festival Play”) is next, followed by *Siegfried*, then *Götterdämmerung*. It all started in 1848 when Wagner wrote 11 pages he published as *The Nibelung Myth: as Sketch for a Drama*. But it was almost 30 years before the first performance of the completed work was given in a theater Wagner had constructed specifically for that purpose in Bayreuth, Germany. His intention was for the *Ring* to be performed as a whole, rather than broken up into its individual operas. It’s a monumental work in both scope and impact, and it is not going too far to say many people who attend a cycle feel their lives have been changed forever by the experience.

Most modern performances of the *Ring* are spread over a week, as Wagner wished, but since the composer’s own time, theaters have also been presenting the separate parts on their own. *Walküre* quickly became the most enduringly popular, for a number of reasons. For one thing, after the gods, goddesses, dwarves, and giants of *Rheingold*, *Walküre* introduces human beings into the story of the *Ring*. It begins with two very sympathetic people, Siegmund and Sieglinde, and the first act is devoted to them falling in love. “The score of the first act of *Walküre* will soon be ready; it is wonderfully beautiful. I have done nothing like it or approaching it before,” Wagner told Liszt. He was right. The music of *Die Walküre* builds significantly on *Das Rheingold*, where he had begun using leitmotifs to construct the music. These short segments of melody, rhythm, or harmony could be associated with a character or a dramatic event, even an emotion or an object. In *Walküre*, Wagner used them to help suspend time itself while the drama took place, wordlessly, *inside* the characters. Thanks to Wagner’s brilliant writing for orchestra—something he had to develop even above what he had done in *Rheingold*—the audience actually experiences for themselves the inner lives of the characters on stage.

Just moments into Act I of *Die Walküre*, Sieglinde offers Siegmund some water. The stage directions say: “Siegmund (drinks and hands her back the horn.

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Deborah Voigt as Brünnhilde,
photographed by Brigitte Lacombe

As he signals his thanks with his head, his glance fastens on her features with growing interest.)” To underline these stage directions, Wagner silences the orchestra entirely, except for a single cello. For nine measures this lone cello plays some of the sweetest, most yearning music imaginable, before being joined by the rest of the cellos and two basses for another eight measures. Listeners need not know what labels commentators have attached to the music to experience for themselves the longing in Siegmund’s soul, the love that is even then starting to blossom.

The plot of *Die Walküre* can be summarized in a few dozen words; the outer events are relatively simple. But the inner journey of the characters is uncommonly rich and complex. It’s the difference between flying from New York to California and driving there: You fly because you want to get to your destination as quickly as possible. But if you drive, the journey itself becomes the point.

In *Walküre*, Wagner’s music has a new power that compels us to let him be our guide on the quest he is undertaking. That’s how he allows us to experience for ourselves the growing love between Siegmund and Sieglinde, to feel the rightness, the naturalness of it. The powerful nature of their love is well established long before they (and we) discover they are brother and sister, so our emotions accept their love, even if our mind—assuming we can wrench it away from Wagner’s music—might have a few questions.

In addition to Siegmund and Sieglinde, we meet Brünnhilde, one of the central characters in the *Ring*. She enters the story in Act II, singing one of the most famous (and one of the shortest) “numbers” in the entire cycle, the battle cry “Hojotoho!” Wagner was extraordinarily careful in noting exactly how this should be sung. The first two syllables (“Ho-jo”) are a single phrase, followed by a sixteenth note (“to”), then the last syllable (“ho”) to be held for five beats, followed by a single beat rest. This gives the music a quick, bouncy quality that is emphasized later when Wagner asks the soprano to sing the final “ho” on two notes, separated by an octave leap but connected smoothly, ending on high Bs and then high Cs. He also asks her to trill—nonstop—for almost two measures before launching up to a high B and holding it for two measures. If a soprano can sing this incredibly difficult “Hojotoho!” as Wagner intended, the audience cannot help but be charmed by the impetuous, cheeky, rambunctious teenage girl sassing her father, Wotan—to his delight and ours. Her character, and her relationship with Wotan, are firmly established within a couple of minutes.

It is also one of the few genuinely joyful moments in *Walküre*, an opera rather short on happiness. While in the thick of composing, Wagner lamented to his friend, the Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein, “I find the subject of *Die Walküre* too painful by far: there’s really not one of the world’s sorrows that the work does not express, and in the most painful form; playing artistic games with that pain is

taking its revenge on me: it has made me really ill several times already, so that I have had to stop completely.”

Another reason for the popularity of *Walküre* is that we are likely to find ourselves mirrored in it—if not in the new love enjoyed by Sieglinde and Siegmund in Act I, then by the dilemma facing Wotan in Act II, as he realizes that all of his careful planning is for naught and that, despite his best efforts, his life has taken a terrible turn, leaving him no way out. The scene in which Wotan wrestles with this crisis caused Wagner no end of trouble, and he agonized over whether or not people would grasp what Wotan is going through. “For the development of the great tetralogy, this is the most important scene of all,” he insisted.

Wotan’s anguish continues, with a new focus, in the final act. Its ending is one of the most extraordinary in all of opera, with a sense of loss, grief, abandonment, and yet overwhelming love as Wotan is forced to let go of the most precious thing in the world to him, Brünnhilde. It seems like a bitter defeat: his cherished son Siegmund is dead. His favorite child, Brünnhilde, is banished forever. His plans—to create a hero who would be able to win back the ring and return it to the Rhinemaidens and thus save the gods—have crumbled to nothingness. He has nowhere to turn.

And yet it is *because* of these apparent failures that Siegfried (in the next opera) turns out to be the very hero the gods need. This glimmer of hope, in the middle of such overwhelming sorrow, is surely another reason why *Die Walküre* is such a beloved opera.

Bavaria’s King Ludwig II was not willing to wait until Wagner had completed the entire *Ring* before experiencing *Die Walküre* in the theater. Against Wagner’s wishes, the opera was given for the first time on June 26, 1870, in Munich, nine months after the premiere of *Das Rheingold*. Wagner refused to be involved in any way, and he asked his friends not to attend. The famous violinist Joseph Joachim was there. So were Brahms and Saint-Saëns. Despite his friendship with Wagner, Liszt went and sobbed through part of the opera. Even newspapers usually critical of Wagner pronounced *Die Walküre* an extraordinary work of art.

The fact that opera houses continue to devote considerable time and resources to presenting *Die Walküre* in new ways proves that Liszt did not exaggerate in his assessment when he wrote to Wagner, “Your *Walküre* [score] has arrived, and I should like to reply to you by your *Lohengrin* chorus, sung by 1,000 voices, and repeated a thousandfold: ‘A wonder! A wonder!’”

—Paul Thomason

The Cast and Creative Team



James Levine

MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR (CINCINNATI, OHIO)

MET HISTORY Since his 1971 company debut leading *Tosca*, he has conducted nearly 2,500 operatic performances at the Met—more than any other conductor in the company's history. Of the 85 operas he has led here, 13 were company premieres (including *Stiffelio*, *I Lombardi*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Cenerentola*, *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Erwartung*, *Moses und Aron*, *Idomeneo*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*). He also led the world premieres of Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*.

THIS SEASON In his 40th anniversary season at the Met, he conducts the opening night new production premiere of *Das Rheingold*, the new production of *Die Walküre*, and revivals of *Simon Boccanegra*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Wozzeck*, as well as performances of *The Bartered Bride* at The Juilliard School and *Don Carlo* and *La Bohème* during the Met's Japan tour. He also leads the MET Orchestra and the MET Chamber Ensemble in four concerts at Carnegie Hall. Maestro Levine returned to the Boston Symphony Orchestra for his seventh, and final, season as music director, leading three of John Harbison's symphonies; Schumann and Mahler symphonies for major anniversaries of their births; and music of Wagner, Mozart, Bartók, and Stravinsky. He makes his debut with the Staatskapelle Berlin (Mahler's Sixth Symphony) in May before taking the Met on tour to Japan for the fifth time, where he will celebrate the 40th anniversary of his debut on June 5 in Nagoya with *Don Carlo*.



Robert Lepage

DIRECTOR (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met, Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* at the Lyon Opera and Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Lorin Maazel's *1984* in Valencia.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is versatile in every form of theater craft, working extensively as a director, scenic artist, playwright, actor, and film director. In 1984 his play *Circulations* toured Canada, which was quickly followed by *The Dragon's Trilogy*, *Vinci*, *Polygraph*, and *Tectonic Plates*. From 1989 to 1993 he was artistic director of the Théâtre Français at Ottawa's National Arts Centre and in 1992 he became the first North American to direct a Shakespeare play at London's National Theatre. He founded his multidisciplinary production company, Ex Machina, in 1994, and under his artistic direction this new team produced a steady output of plays, including *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and a solo production of *Elsinore*. He wrote and directed

his first feature film, *Le Confessionnal*, in 1994 and went on to direct films of *The Polygraph*, *Nô*, *Possible Worlds*, and an adaptation of his play *The Far Side of the Moon*. In 1997 he opened La Caserne, a multidisciplinary production center in Quebec City where he and his team have since created and produced projects that include opera productions, film projects, and theatrical and visual works. He is the creator and director of Cirque du Soleil's *KÀ* (a permanent show currently in residence in Las Vegas), and his operatic directorial projects include *The Rake's Progress* for Brussels's La Monnaie (2007), *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Erwartung* for the Canadian Opera Company (1992), and *La Damnation de Faust*, which was seen in Japan in 1999 and in Paris in 2001, 2004, and 2006.



Neilson Vignola

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been director of productions for numerous festivals in Quebec, including the International Festival of New Dance and the Festival de Théâtre des Amériques. Since 1981 he has worked on many productions with the Quebec Opera, and he was the director of productions for the Montreal Opera from 1990 to 1993. He has collaborated with Robert Lepage and Ex Machina on *La Damnation de Faust* (Japan's Saito Kinen Festival and at Paris's Bastille Opera), Maazel's *1984* (Covent Garden), and *The Rake's Progress* (La Monnaie in Brussels). He has been technical director and tour manager for Cirque du Soleil's *Saltimbanco*, worked with Lepage on Cirque du Soleil's permanent show *KÀ*, now in residence in Las Vegas, and was director of creation for the company's permanent show in Macao, *Zaia*. He worked again with Lepage on Cirque du Soleil's latest touring show, *Totem*, which opened last May in Montreal.



Carl Fillion

SET DESIGNER (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since creating the set designs for Robert Lepage's play *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* in 1993, he has worked with the director and Ex Machina on 15 productions, including *Elsinore*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Geometry of*

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

Miracles, *La Celestina*, *Jean-Sans-Nom*, and the operas *La Damnation de Faust*, 1984, and *The Rake's Progress*. In addition to Lepage, he has worked with various directors in Quebec and Europe on productions such as *Simon Boccanegra* for Barcelona's Liceu, *The Burial at Thebes* for Dublin's Abbey Theatre, and with Montreal's Cirque du Soleil.



François St-Aubin

COSTUME DESIGNER (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* for his debut and *Die Walküre* at the Met and *Macbeth* in Sydney and Melbourne.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has worked with Robert Lepage since 20007, when he designed costumes for *The Blue Dragon*. Since graduating from Canada's National Theatre School he has designed costumes for more than 80 theater productions, a dozen operas, and several contemporary dance companies. Work with Canada's Stratford Festival includes costumes for *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *An Ideal Husband*, and *Don Juan*. He has also designed costumes for *Carmen* for Montreal Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, and San Diego Opera, and *Macbeth* for Montreal Opera and Opera Australia.



Etienne Boucher

LIGHTING DESIGNER (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* for his debut and *Die Walküre* at the Met and *Totem*, currently touring with Cirque du Soleil.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has worked on more than 100 productions for theater, dance, musical comedy, and opera since 1999. He has worked with Ex Machina and Robert Lepage since 2004, developing their work together on shows that include *La Celestina*, *Lipsynch*, *The Rake's Progress*, and *Le Rossignol and Other Fables*.



Boris Firquet

VIDEO IMAGE ARTIST (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been making experimental videos since 1988 and since 1996 has been interested in live stage video. He creates almost all of his own custom software and his video works have been presented at numerous venues, including Quebec City's Mois Multi Festival, the Victoriaville Festival of Contemporary Music, Toronto's Images Festival, Montreal's FCMM, Tokyo Video Festival, Berlin's Transmediale, Marseille's Vidéochroniques, and the Liège International Video Festival. In opera he has collaborated with Robert Lepage on *The Rake's Progress* for La Monnaie in Brussels, with subsequent performances in Lyon, San Francisco, London, and Madrid.



Stephanie Blythe

MEZZO-SOPRANO (MONGAUP VALLEY, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Katisha in *The Mikado* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and concerts at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and Carnegie Hall.

MET APPEARANCES More than 150 performances of 24 roles, including Orfeo in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Ježibaba in *Rusalka*, Ulrica, Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare*, Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*, Eduige in *Rodelinda*, Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress*, and the Alto Solo in *Parsifal* (debut, 1995).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Azucena in *Il Trovatore* for her debut at the San Francisco Opera, Baba the Turk at Covent Garden, Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* at the Arizona Opera, Amneris in *Aida* at the Pittsburgh Opera, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and Carmen in Seattle, Azucena and Mistress Quickly at Covent Garden, Isabella in Philadelphia and Santa Fe, and Cornelia and Mistress Quickly at the Paris Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Deborah Voigt

SOPRANO (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* and Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* at the Met, Minnie at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Salome for her debut at Washington National Opera, a one-woman show written by Terrence McNally and the title role of *Annie Get Your Gun* at the Glimmerglass Festival, and concert engagements with the Dresden Staatskapelle and New York Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES Title roles of *La Gioconda*, *Die Ägyptische Helena*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Tosca*, and *Aida*; Chrysothemis in *Elektra*; Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*; Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde*; Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (debut, 1991); Cassandra in *Les Troyens*; Elsa in *Lohengrin*; Leonora in *Il Trovatore* and *La Forza del Destino*; Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*; and the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Minnie with the San Francisco Opera; Salome at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; her first Isolde in Vienna, followed by a 23-minute standing ovation; President Clinton's visit to her Met performances as *Aida*; a breakthrough *Ariadne* in Boston; and Agnes Gooch in her high school production of *Auntie Mame*.



Eva-Maria Westbroek

SOPRANO (THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS)

THIS SEASON Sieglinde in *Die Walküre* in Frankfurt and for her debut at the Met, Leonora in *La Forza del Destino* for her debut at the Vienna State Opera, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* and the title role in the world premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Anna Nicole* at Covent Garden, and Ariane in Dukas's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* in Barcelona.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Sieglinde in San Francisco, Valencia, Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg, and Bayreuth, Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* at Covent Garden and in Amsterdam, Chrysothemis in *Elektra* at the Salzburg Festival, Jenůfa in Munich, Katarina in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at the Netherlands Opera and Covent Garden, Leonora in Brussels, and Cassandra in *Les Troyens* with the Netherlands Opera. She has also sung Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, and Chrysothemis with the Paris Opera; and Desdemona in *Otello*, *Tosca*, Jenůfa, and Carlotta in Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* in Stuttgart.



Jonas Kaufmann

TENOR (MUNICH, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at the Met and the title role of *Don Carlo* on tour with the company in Japan, Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at Covent Garden and in concert at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Florestan in *Fidelio* and Don José in *Carmen* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Werther at the Vienna State Opera, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at La Scala and Covent Garden, and his American recital debut in Los Angeles.

MET APPEARANCES Cavaradossi, Don José, Alfredo in *La Traviata* (debut, 2006), and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Don José in Munich, Zurich, and at La Scala; Cavaradossi in London, Vienna, Berlin, Zurich, and Munich; Don Carlo in London and Zurich; the Prince in Humperdinck's *Königskinder* in Zurich; the title role of *Lohengrin* in Munich and at the Bayreuth Festival; and Werther, Florestan, and Alfredo at the Paris Opera. He has also sung Ruggero in *La Rondine*, Alfredo, and Don José at Covent Garden, Des Grieux in *Manon* in Chicago and Vienna, and Alfredo at the Paris Opera, La Scala, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.



Hans-Peter König

BASS (DÜSSELDORF, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and Hunding in *Die Walküre* at the Met, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in Düsseldorf, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* in Barcelona, and Hagen in *Götterdämmerung* at the Paris Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Sarastro (debut, 2010) and Daland.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a member of Düsseldorf's Deutsche Oper am Rhein, where he has sung many of his Wagnerian roles, including Gurnemanz, King Heinrich in *Lohengrin*, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*, Hermann in *Tannhäuser*, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and Fasolt, Fafner, Hunding, and Hagen in the *Ring* cycle. He has also sung Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Daland, and Sarastro at Covent Garden; Fafner and Hagen at the Bayreuth Festival; and King Heinrich at the Baden-Baden Festival and for his debut at La Scala. His repertoire also includes the roles of Zaccharia in *Nabucco*, the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo*, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Caspar in *Der Freischütz*, and Boris Godunov.



Bryn Terfel

BASS-BARITONE (PWLLHELI, WALES)

THIS SEASON Wotan in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met and Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* with the Welsh National Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Scarpia in *Tosca*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 1994), Leporello and Don Giovanni in *Don Giovanni*, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, the title role of *Falstaff*, and Jochanaan in *Salome*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Scarpia and Wotan at Covent Garden, the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Covent Garden and with the Welsh National Opera, Don Giovanni and Falstaff in Vienna, and the title role of Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* at London's Royal Festival Hall. He has also sung Méphistophélès in *Faust* and the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* at Covent Garden; the Four Villains at Paris's Bastille Opera; *Sweeney Todd* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* with the San Francisco Opera; Figaro at La Scala; Falstaff in Houston, Los Angeles, London, and at the Salzburg Festival; and Jochanaan at the Salzburg Festival and in London, Vienna, and Munich.

ACT I SHADOW VIDEO

Combat choreographer and performer **Olivier Lunardi-Dussault**

Performers **Ella and Lily-Anne Barry-Brisson** (twins), **Geneviève Bérubé**, **Sébastien Fortin**,

Katrine Patry, **Jacinthe Pauzé Boisvert**, **Francis Roberge**, **Jean-François Savard**, **Pascal Tremblay**

Produced by **Ciné Scène**

ADDITIONAL EX MACHINA PRODUCTION STAFF

Costume prototypes **Atelier de Couture Sonya B.**, **Jessica Poirier-Chang**, **Richard Provost**, **Valérie**

Deschênes; Wig and make up research **Florence Cornet**; Properties production

Atelier Sylvain Racine, **Paul Duval**, **Boscus**, **Tridim**, **Inventions Guité**; Acrobatic harnesses **Climbing**

Sutra; Lighting assistants **Valy Tremblay**, **David Lavallée**; Set designer assistants **Anna Tusell Sanchez**,

Santiago Martos Gonzalez

WORKSHOP PERFORMERS **Anne Barry**, **Geneviève Bérubé**, **Guillaume Chouinard**, **Michael Duffy**,

Andrea Legg, **Guy Lessard**, **Jacinthe Pauzé Boisvert**, **Jenny Ritchie**, **Francis Roberge**, **Éric Robidoux**,

Martin Vaillancourt

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Yamaha is the official piano of the Metropolitan Opera.